



**Ben  
McPeck  
Memorial  
Concert  
May 11, 1981**



## Benjamin D. McPeck

August 28, 1934–January 14, 1981

Ben McPeck was born and grew up in Trail, B.C. Already a committed and accomplished musician in his teenage years, he was faced with the choice of pursuing a musical career in Hollywood or moving to Toronto. He chose Toronto and Canada has been greatly enriched by his decision.

His unique career had many diverse aspects. He was perhaps best known as Canada's "Jingle King" and in fact largely created the commercial music industry in Canada. Millions of people who never knew Ben's name will remember his musical logos for the Toronto-Dominion Bank, Chargex, Speedy Muffler King, Labatt's and C.N. Before Ben's time, "jingles" were mainly imported from New York and Los Angeles. He also selflessly trained and helped his younger competitors in the commercial music business. Dozens of this country's finest studio, classical and jazz musicians now work in the commercial music industry which Ben, more than anyone, helped to establish.

He was instrumental in the early success of such leading Canadian international rock groups as *The Guess Who* and the *Bachman Turner Overdrive* and such stars as Burton Cummings.

Some of his best known songs include *Rain Brings People Together* and the orchestral arrangement of *The Canada Song*. His film credits include scores for *The Rowdyman* and *Catch The Sun*. He was the guiding force in founding the Guild of Canadian Film Composers.

In the early 1970s, Ben began a close association, unique among composers of music for commercials, with many of Canada's foremost classical musicians. His aim was to create a type of chamber music that combined both his high compositional standards and his gift of pleasing large audiences. His early studies with John Weinzwieg and his later special association with Godfrey Ridout are both reflected in his unique style of composing. He fervently believed that there were no necessary border lines between "popular" and "serious" music.

Consistent with this philosophy, he was very active in the Canadian Music Centre, the Canadian League of Composers, CAPAC (Composers, Authors and Publishers Association of Canada), and the Faculty of Music Council at the University of Toronto, his alma mater.

His last major project was to conceive the idea of a founding library of Canadian popular music for orchestras. The library's intent is to fill a much needed gap for orchestras by providing arrangements of Canadian popular music, old and new. It is being underwritten by Imperial Oil and organized by the Canadian Music Centre. The project will be called The Imperial Oil McPeck Pops Library in recognition of Ben's contribution to the library and to Canadian popular music.

Howard P. Knopf, April 22, 1981.

**Printed courtesy of Imperial Oil Limited**

**Ben McPeck  
Memorial Concert  
May 11, 1981.**

**MacMillan Theatre  
Edward Johnson Building  
University of Toronto**

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**Program**

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Introduction by Robert Falk, Acting Dean of Faculty of Music,  
University of Toronto  
Presentation by John V. Mills, Q.C. on behalf of CAPAC  
(Composers, Authors and Publishers Association of Canada Limited)  
All of the music in this concert was composed by Ben McPeck.

**Remembrance**

**Monica Gaylord, Piano**

**Three settings for Soprano Voice and Piano**

(based upon poems of e.e. cummings)

**Billie Bridgman, Soprano  
Monica Gaylord, Piano**

**Piano Quintette in Eb**

**York Winds\*  
Monica Gaylord, Piano**

**Kensington Market Suite**

1. Saturday Morning
2. Beautiful Princess of Spadina
3. The Traffic Cop
4. The Low Life
5. The Blind Pencil Seller

**York Winds\*  
Billie Bridgman,  
Narrator**

**INTERMISSION**

Remarks by J. Lyman Potts, C.M.,  
General Manager of Canadian Talent Library.

**The Little Bird**

**York Winds\*  
Billie Bridgman, Narrator**

**Alice in Wonderland**

1. Overture and Prologue
2. The Duchess' Sneezing Song
3. Alice's Song (The Riddle Song)
4. Finale

(lyrics by Nancy White)  
**Billie Bridgman,  
voice  
Monica Gaylord,  
voice & piano**

**Ragtime piece for Brass Quintette in Eb**

**Canadian Brass†**

**Silent Cinema**

(a contemporary look at old movies  
and TV reruns)

**Canadian Brass†  
Monica Gaylord, Piano**

This concert was made possible through the assistance of **CAPAC,  
CBC, Guild of Canadian Film Composers, Imperial Oil Limited,  
Howard P. Knopf, and The University of Toronto.**

Concert proceeds will go to Ben McPeck Scholarship,  
Faculty of Music, University of Toronto.

**\*York Winds**

Douglas Stewart (flute), Laurence Cherney (oboe), Paul Grice  
(clarinet), Marcus Hennigar (horn), Gerald Robinson (bassoon).

**†Canadian Brass**

Fred Mills, Ronald Romm (trumpets), Graeme Page (horn),  
Eugene Watts (trombone), Charles Daellenbach (tuba).



